DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 475 719 HE 035 816

TITLE	The Massachusetts Board of Higher Education, 1990-2002.
INSTITUTION	Massachusetts State Board of Higher Education, Boston.
PUB DATE	2003-00-00
NOTE	13p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Accountability; Educational Finance; *Educational History; *Higher Education; *Policy Formation; *Public Colleges; State Agencies; State Programs
IDENTIFIERS	Massachusetts; *Massachusetts Board of Regents of Higher Education

ABSTRACT

This report traces the history and accomplishments of the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education over the past 12 years, during 3 state administrations. In the early 1990s, as the Commonwealth was feeling the impact of recession, the perceived quality of the system was declining, as were enrollments and retention. State policymakers and leaders made a deliberate effort to raise the national ranking of the Massachusetts public higher education system. In 1991, Governor Weld changed the organizational structure of public higher education in Massachusetts, establishing the Higher Education Coordinating Council, now the Board of Higher Education, and more centralized administration. In 1996 new tuition and fee charges were established, and in 1998, increased accountability and more cost effective use of resources were promoted by the institution of a performance measurement system. Other reforms between the early 1990s and the present contributed to improved quality, strengthened the partnerships among all levels of education, promoted workforce development, improved educational facilities, and expanded endowments. The report also outlines challenges that face the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education, including the needs of an increasingly diverse population, the requirements of the knowledge-based economy, and financial constraints. (SLD)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 475 719

THE MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

STEPHEN P. TOCCO, CHAIRMAN
JUDITH I. GILL, CHANCELLOR

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J.R. Warner

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

One Ashburton Place, Room 1401
Boston, Massachusetts 02108
(617) 994-6950
Fax Number: (617) 727-0955
Web: www.mass.edu

HE035816

THE MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
1990-2002

Over the past twelve years, under the leadership of the Weld, Cellucci, and Swift administrations, Massachusetts public higher education has become:

- √ **more accessible**
- √ **more diverse**
- √ **higher in quality**
- √ **more responsive to the workforce needs of the Commonwealth and**
- √ **more accountable for its performance**.

SETTING THE SCENE

In the early 1990s, the Commonwealth was feeling the deep impact of the recession. Resources for public higher education were declining steeply. Increasing budget pressures, rising unemployment, and an unstable pattern of state support made it difficult to effectively plan for and manage the system of public higher education. Over the period 1979-1993, the number of Massachusetts 18-year olds had fallen 45%.

The perceived quality of the system was declining as were enrollments and retention. Rising tuition and fees were undermining the affordability of public higher education for many families. Costs at Massachusetts public higher education institutions were the highest in the nation, and support to higher education as a percent of the state's budget was among the lowest.

Some Facts: Then

- 118,885 (FTE) students were enrolled at public institutions in Massachusetts in fall 1990.
- Average tuition and fees at public institutions had increased from $1,528 to $2,456 between FY 1988 and FY 1991, an increase of over 60%.
- State appropriations for higher education had dropped by 33% over that same period and were $4,545 per full-time student by FY 1992.
- Financial aid for students at public institutions was less than $250 per student.
- Charges to students rose as a percentage of the state's median income from 6.8% in 1990-91 to 9% in 1993-94.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

After the Commonwealth rebounded financially from the recession of the early 1990s, state policymakers and leaders made a deliberate effort to respond to the unacceptable national ranking of Massachusetts' public higher education in terms of cost and state support. To assure the system's accessibility and affordability while strengthening quality, a three-pronged strategy was initiated:

- Reduce tuition and fees
- Increase financial aid
- Increase state appropriations

Some Facts: Fall 2001

- 123,612 (FTE) students are enrolled at public institutions.
- Average student tuition and fees are $3,229.
- Financial aid for students at public institutions is $550 per FTE.
- State appropriations per full-time student reached $7,630.
- Charges to students as a percentage of the state's median income fell from 9% in FY 1994 to 7% in FY 2000.

The success of this strategy has been demonstrated by consistent growth in student enrollment and the state's steadily improving national rankings on both cost and state support indicators. In fact, the growth rate in the Massachusetts public higher education system has outpaced the growth rate in every other state in the nation.

RESULTS (FY 1991- FY 2001)

Soon after taking office in January 1991, Governor Weld appointed a Commission to study the future of state and community colleges in Massachusetts. He charged the Commission to review the mission, programs, financing, and governance of the state and community colleges. The recommendations of this Commission led to many of the results described in this report and continue to guide the Board of Higher Education today.

✓ **Changed the Structure of Massachusetts Public Higher Education**

In 1991, Governor William Weld changed the organizational structure of public higher education. The new organizational structure:

- o Established a Secretariat for Education with overarching responsibilities for elementary, secondary, and higher education.
- o Placed all five University campuses under a single board of trustees for the University of Massachusetts.
- o Gave greater authority to the local boards of trustees at each state and community college.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

- Replaced the Board of Regents with the Higher Education Coordinating Council (now Board of Higher Education) The Board of Higher Education was given the responsibility for defining the mission of public higher education and establishing goals to achieve a well-coordinated quality system of public higher education in the Commonwealth.

✓ **Increased Access to Higher Education**

In FY 1996, the Fair Share approach to establishing charges at public institutions was instituted, reducing tuition and fees by more than 12% from 1995 to 1999. In 2002, under the Fair Share Plan, undergraduate students paid no more than 33% of the net cost of education at the University and state colleges and no more than 25% at community colleges.

- Established the State and Community College Access Grant Program, enabling students whose family income is less than $32,000 to attend community and state colleges at no cost and students whose family income is between $32,000 and $80,000 to pay only $500 per year at community colleges.

- Introduced the UPLAN in 1995, a savings plan that guaranteed that prepaid college tuitions savings would keep pace with inflation. It was rated the most successful program in the country on a per capita basis.

- Public institutions awarded 26,627 degrees in 2001, a five-year record high; 85% of the degrees conferred were awarded to Massachusetts residents.

- Degrees awarded to minority students increased 27.4% between 1997 and 2001.

- UMass Online and the new Massachusetts Public College eLearning Network are making learning accessible to students throughout the Commonwealth through distance education.

✓ **Ensured Accountability and Cost Effective Use of Resources**

In 1998, Governor Cellucci signed a budget that established a performance measurement system for public higher education to assess how well campuses were meeting several statutorily mandated objectives. The Board and staff have accomplished the following:

- Approved more focused missions for the three segments of public higher education and for each campus.

- Developed a Performance Measurement System, holding campuses accountable for achieving their missions and specified objectives and the Board responsible for monitoring results.

- Required each campus to undergo an annual external audit and each campus board of trustees to have an audit committee.

- Implemented a post-tenure review process for faculty in all three-segments of the system.

- Instituted a Full Disclosure Policy, requiring campuses to publish an estimate of the full cost per student, the level of state operating subsidy, and the net cost of their education.

- Implemented with the Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research (MISER) the Placement Accountability System (PAS), proposed by Governor Weld to track the placement of graduates of public institutions in the workplace.

√ **Improved Quality**

- Approved higher admission standards for the state colleges and the University

- Reduced the number of students entering four-year colleges needing remedial coursework.

- Created Commonwealth College at UMass Amherst and the first inter-segmental network of honors programs in the country.

- Implemented a common academic assessment program and standards for all incoming degree students to ensure that students will be placed in college courses for which they are prepared.

- Conducted external reviews of academic programs in Computer Science and Information Technology, Criminal Justice, Physics, and Chemistry.

- Discontinued 75 low-enrolled or underperforming academic programs.

- Enhanced teaching and learning through funding SMART classrooms on every campus and state-of-the art computing equipment and technology.

√ **Strengthened Pre-K-12 - Higher Education Partnership**

- The Education Reform Act of 1993 called attention not only to the crisis in public education but to the critical role of higher education in the preparation of teachers.

- In 1995, the BHE began the **College-to-School reporting initiative**. By providing information to high schools about the success of their graduates who attend Massachusetts public colleges, the Board of Higher Education

enables schools to evaluate their effectiveness in preparing students for collegiate study.

- Following the results of the first Massachusetts Teacher Test in 1998, the Cellucci/Swift administration asked the Board of Higher Education to prepare a report on what could be done to improve the quality of teacher preparation. The report, ***Creating Tomorrow*** (1998), recommended specific goals for the higher education community, and the campuses, under the leadership of the **Joint Commission on Educator Preparation** (2000), made many of those goals a reality.

- Through the Task Force on Teacher Preparation in Public Higher Education, presidents of state and community colleges have established standards for overall program improvement, recruitment and community outreach and have sponsored the development of statewide articulation agreements enabling community college students to transfer to four-year teacher preparation programs.

- Through the federally funded Title II Eisenhower Grant Program, the BHE distributed approximately a million dollars annually to partnerships of schools and public and private higher education institutions to improve teacher recruitment, training and support, particularly in math and science.

- As one strategy to address the growing shortage of teachers from underrepresented groups, the legislature appropriated $2.5 million in the FY03 budget for grants to paraprofessionals working in the public schools who seek to complete baccalaureate programs and become fully licensed teachers.

- Each year over 1,100 residents prepared at state colleges and the University pass the teacher certification test and become licensed Massachusetts teachers. All public institutions currently exceed the state-mandated 80% pass rate on this test.

- After statutory changes eliminated the post of Secretary of Education in 1997, the Governor made the Chancellor and Commissioner voting members of each other's boards.

- In 2000, Governor Swift established the **Joint Committee on Educational Policy**, calling on the Board of Education and the Board of Higher Education to work more closely together to improve public education in the Commonwealth. Most recently, the Committee has proposed a plan to create pathways to further education for students who graduate in 2003 without having passed MCAS.

- The Commonwealth was one of five states selected for the American Diploma Project, a national initiative to align high school standards with college entrance requirements and workforce skills.

√ **Promoted Workforce Development**

- Since the early 1990s, there has been a growing understanding by the Weld-Cellucci-Swift administrations and by successive legislatures that public higher education is central to the economic and social development of Commonwealth.

- The higher education system was recognized as one of the "competitiveness partners" in the 1993 guidance document developed by the Executive Office of Economic Affairs, "A Statewide Strategy for Job Creation and Economic Growth."

- The Workforce Training Incentive Program was established in FY 2001. Its goals were to promote workforce development, minimize the shortage of skilled workers, and increase economic opportunity by providing incentives to colleges to form partnerships with businesses in their communities for workforce training and development.

- Enrollments in non-credit workforce/job skills training at community colleges grew more than 60% in four years, from 33,327 in FY 1997 to over 55,468 in FY 2001. During that same period, certificates awarded increased over 25.3%.

- The Commonwealth Information Technology Initiative (CITI) provided a framework and resources for public institutions to work collaboratively with industry to modernize and expand computer science and information technology programs system-wide.

✓ **Improved Educational Facilities**

The Weld, Cellucci, and Swift administrations have invested over $300 million in capital funds to maintain and enhance the higher education facilities in the Commonwealth.

- This commitment has led to the construction of facilities such as the Polymer Science Center at UMass Amherst, a state-of-the-art science center at Worcester State, the Reggie Lewis Track and Athletic Center at Roxbury Community College, new academic facilities at Bridgewater State College and North Shore Community College and a new Library and Resource Learning Center at Quinsigamond Community College.

- The Board of Higher Education has undertaken a Strategic Capital Planning Initiative with the Division of Capital Asset Management. The results of this thorough review of the condition and use of campus facilities will guide BHE recommendations for the major renovation and new construction projects to be requested in a new capital authorization bond bill.

- These projects allow the Commonwealth to offer a more affordable education than private institutions with equally well-equipped facilities. In addition,

capital projects such as those mentioned above provide jobs to various construction related labor forces.

✓ **Expanded Endowments**

In June 1996, the "Public Higher Education Endowment Incentive Program" was created. This program provided matching state support to encourage private fundraising by the University and the state and community colleges.

- Between FY 1997 and FY 2001, campuses raised over $125 million through the Endowment Incentive Program.
- During that same period, the state provided matching funds to the campuses totaling over $50 million.

NEXT STEPS

Facts

√ The Massachusetts public higher education system is the fastest growing system in the country.

√ Higher education leads to higher earnings and a higher standard of living and quality of life for the residents of the Commonwealth.

√ 85% of the jobs in a knowledge-based economy require post-secondary education.

√ Over 63% of the Massachusetts residents graduating from high school and attending college in state attend public institutions.

√ 75% percent of public higher education graduates enter the Massachusetts workforce after graduation.

√ Public higher education is the principal post-secondary entry point for the minority and low-income students that will increasingly make up the student population.

√ Graduates of public institutions serve nearly 14,000 different employers in the Commonwealth, supporting more than one in six employers.

The mission of Massachusetts public higher education found in statute (accessible, affordable, accountable, of high quality, and responsive to the academic, technical, and economic needs of the Commonwealth and its residents) continues to guide the

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

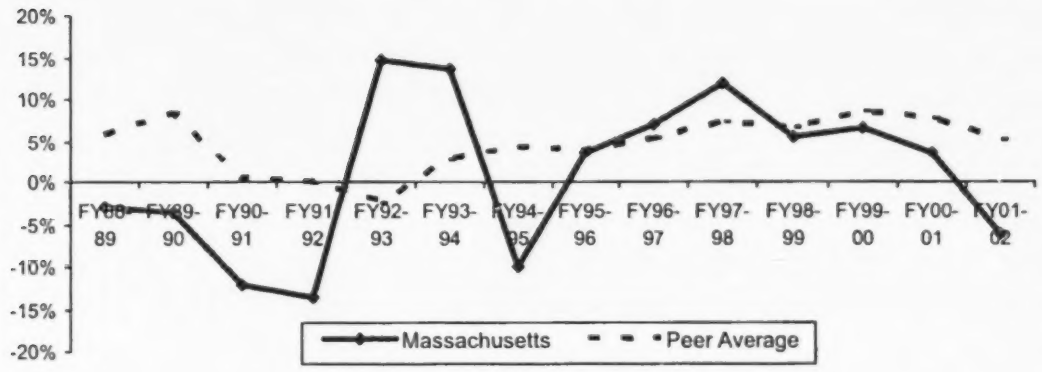
work of the system today. With the support of the Weld-Cellucci-Swift administrations and the Legislature, public higher education campuses have become "opportunity institutions." The Board is committed to ensuring that these same opportunities are available to the next generation of students.

Public higher education has accomplished much in the past twelve years. There is still more to be done. Unfortunately, the current state of the economy, increased unemployment, and a series of unexpected budget cuts create an environment of uncertainty that presents the same challenges in planning and managing the system as those experienced in the early 1990s.

More now than ever before, the Commonwealth's economic growth and recovery depend on residents of the Commonwealth having access to affordable, quality public higher education. A high quality educational continuum from K-16 is critical. Research has shown that there is a significant jump in earnings for persons holding an Associate's degree over those who have no college degree. "The jump is more than $10,000 a year for full-time, full-year employees. Increased earning potential through the attainment of college degrees is the significant key to providing individuals with opportunity for a high quality of life in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts." (*Massachusetts Public Higher Education: A Shrewd Investment with Significant Returns*, January 2002)

Although Massachusetts has the fastest growing public system of higher education in the country, state appropriations for public higher education are not keeping pace with those in comparable states. Even with strong support for higher education from the Governor and Legislature from 1995-2000, and despite ranking among the top ten states in terms of state wealth and tax revenue, the Commonwealth has lagged consistently behind many peer states in terms of actual dollars appropriated per student. The budget for public higher education fell by 6.2% in FY 2001 and an additional 5% ($56 million) in FY 2002. Low-income students, whose primary access to higher education is through public institutions, are most likely to bear the brunt of these cuts. Others will be affected as well.

Peer Comparison Massachusetts vs. Peer State Average
***Annual* Percent Change in State Appropriations**
FY1998 to FY2002



The investment in Education Reform at the K-12 level has been critical and highly successful. The challenge is to ensure that future Massachusetts high school graduates are not denied the opportunity to take the next step that leads to higher earnings and greater contribution to the life of the Commonwealth. While the percent of the state budget allocated to K-12 education has increased from 11% to 19% over the past 10 years, the portion devoted to higher education has stayed between 4% and 5%.

Challenges

The role of public higher education, in contrast to that of the more than 96 Massachusetts independent institutions, is to meet the needs of the Commonwealth. An overarching question that must be addressed is the nature of the relationship of the system of public higher education to the Commonwealth in the 21st century. Much like Governor Weld did in 1991, the new administration may want to consider forming a Commission to study and make recommendations on the role of Massachusetts public higher education in the 21st century, building on the recent initiatives of the Board in the areas of pre K – 16 articulation, workforce development, and regionalization.

There are several areas that need to be addressed:

1. **How can the system best serve an increasingly diverse population while continuing to meet the needs of Massachusetts knowledge-based economy?** Between 1983 and 2000, employment trends demonstrated a strong shift from manufacturing jobs that require few basic skills (down 31%)

to service sector jobs that require higher levels of education and training. Such an economy demands well-rounded, highly-skilled graduates, especially those with backgrounds in math, science, and technology. Economic recovery will require a new approach to collaboration between the Board of Higher Education and the Office of Economic Development.

2. **How can the system of public higher education be more accountable?** Accountability for campus performance has been a priority for the Governor, Legislature, and the Board over the past decade. The development of a performance measurement system has had many challenges, but great gains have been made. The Board's lack of authority for rewarding performance, for creating incentives for specific improvements, and for tying budget to performance has hindered the effectiveness of the performance measurement system.

3. **How should the Commonwealth finance public higher education? How should the goals of access and equity influence policies guiding the setting of student charges?** Over the past 20 years, the Board has adopted several different approaches to funding public higher education. Currently, funding is not tied to either institutional performance or enrollment. All tuition is returned to the Commonwealth except tuition from graduate and continuing education students, populations that are dramatically increasing on most campuses. Fees, set and retained by campuses, are used by campuses to compensate for decreases in state appropriations. Increased fees and decreases in appropriations for financial aid run counter to the goal of providing access to an increasingly diverse population.

4. **Is the current configuration of the public higher education system - e.g., three segments, 25 campus Boards of Trustees, and one coordinating/governing Board - the most effective and efficient for meeting the future higher education needs of the Commonwealth?** For example, several times in the history of Massachusetts public higher education, the Board has considered a regional approach for coordinating public education. Such an approach would integrate the social, economic and workforce needs of regions and the educational needs of its residents from early childhood throughout their lives and careers. A statewide board would continue to ensure accountability of institutions and promote quality, accessible higher education for all Commonwealth residents and recommend the reallocation of resources. The benefits of viable, regional collaboration deserve study.

5. **How can relations be improved with faculty, staff and other employees at our higher education institutions?** The vast majority of higher education employees belong to collective bargaining units. The current economic situation makes it difficult for bargained contracts to be appropriately funded.

6. **What sources of financing will need to be defined and developed in order to meet the documented need for improved campus facilities?** The Board of Higher Education has recently undertaken a review of the 24 state and community colleges' facility needs for the next ten years. A similar review is needed for the campuses of the University. Based on projected enrollment growth overall, the BHE sees its greatest challenge coming in the next ten years. The review uncovered the need for an aggressive schedule of renovation and modernization of higher education facilities across the Commonwealth. In order to meet the projected enrollment growth, public higher education will need new facilities in select regions of the Commonwealth. The challenge is how to afford all of these necessary capital projects across the system. BHE's current bond allocation will not cover the entire anticipated cost for the next ten years.

To sustain the Commonwealth's commitment to students to provide quality, accessible education over the entire continuum, Massachusetts higher education institutions must be able to depend on sufficient and consistent funding. Such a commitment is essential to our economic growth and recovery and to achievement of equal opportunity for our young people. This is our greatest challenge.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

NOTICE

Reproduction Basis

[X] This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket)" form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.

[ ] This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").